1831 JAN. 18

Phil.a Jan 18th 1831

My dear sister M

I assure you I have exercised some self-denial in deferring this letter till now, but as I expected Mr M'Lemon to go so soon & thought you should for once be saved the postage which I so frequently impose upon you — your letter arrived on the first day of the year and was a most acceptable New years gift — indeed it was my only one as alas I have no friends here who are given to spending their money in this way, it is in vain to regret that I have no old bachelor uncle rich and capricious (as all old bachelors are) who now and then for want of some other object to bestow upon should open his purse and give me a mite never to be missed by himself — I know some who are thus unkindly situated but alas for me I am not of that number — How glad I should have been to have mounted an air balloon and wished you a happy New year, but believe me although this was impossible many a wish was formed and expressed for the happiness of you and our beloved little boy, when I think of him my heart swells with many and mixed emotions the dear little fellow I see him in my dreams, my arms clasp him to my bosom, I see his lovely laughing eyes turned upon me, & sometimes lull him to sleep on my lap — at other times chase him through the house in his merriment and awake to regret for a moment that it was unreal and then to feel grateful that even in this way he can be restored to me for a few moments.

Perfect and vivid are the pictures which fancy presents when our other faculties are all locked up in sleep you cannot, try as you will, restore the face of an absent friend to memory half so perfect as you will see it in sleep, all seems real then

reason is not at hand to check us and destroy the beautiful or terrific illusion —— but nonsense, I did not intend to write a treatise upon dreams which to me are frequently melancholy enough —— I cannot tell you my dear M how it gratifies us to hear of our little darlings prattle, to find from it he still loves his Phil relations and prays for his dear aunts, yes Margaret I should feel very unhappy if James H did not love me, in him I always see a living representative of his beloved Father and while he is spared I shall feel that all of my beloved brother is not departed tell him his aunty Martha is looking forward to the time with great anxiety when she shall hear him lisp his little hymns which his dear Ma has been teaching him and feel his little arms clasped around her neck and his sweet lips pressed to hers in a long long kiss — in the meantime you will please give him as many kisses as you choose for me —— I do not know that I have any news to tell you, in a large city we have very little strictly domestic news and you know I am one of the worst hands to retail it in the world therefore I shall beg you to be satisfied with the humdrum sort of a letter which I always take you with —— there is however one hackneyed subject for me; the weather, which has been intensely cold for about a week and brought us a very heavy Snow-storm the like of which neither Father nor Mother have any recollection of, it commenced on Friday evening and continued till Sunday morning with a violent wind, in our yard, we have a miniature view of the Alps, the snow drifts by the aid of a very bright imagination may be converted into Mont-Blanc and Mont-Rosa certainly with as much propriety as the mill-dam may be compared to Niagara which I assure you one of my dutch Beaus did, at Marietta, I presume

to shew off his extensive information, the Sleighing is as we say splendid (you know our old friend Dr Porter learned us this) I have never seen it so fine, to night I was to have gone home but as there is a special prayer meeting at our church I thought it right to decline going as it would have only gratified my friends I could not have enjoyed my ride for consciousness of neglecting duty, they say they will not go without me so I suppose it will be defferred untile tomorrow. I should like vastly to be in Mifflin now I enjoy the sleighs are flying in all directions and as I am extremely fond of the amusement I might enjoy it there, here it is so extreamly expensive that if we get one or two rides a winter we are fain to be contented you might visit Dr H during sleighing time it would be a very easy way both for little Pet and yourself, I do not know what Johnson is about she seems determined not to write to me do you hear from her sometimes, let me know if you please I am glad to hear such good news from Give my love to her when you write I am much indebted to her for the guava jam which she knows I can do ample justice to — & still in M, I am vastly indebted to him for his good opinion but look upon it as a mere compliment, if I were to write all the fine things I hear of you my dear sir you would receive little else in a sheet of paper, but I fear my dear M if the calastrophe to which you referred were to take place, with our controversies we should squeeze so much lemon into the sherbet that it would not prove very palatable to either party, not bear a predominance of acid in the marriage dish which I sadly fear with my calvinistic and his armenian notions would be the case — I believe he would find me to answer his description nearer home — L Eldridge asks for you often he says his ride last summer was the happiest period of his life

her thoughts seem to hover very ominously over Mexer town and its environs — he sighs, and sighs again for the happy days he spent in M —— if you were here I could tell you five or three things not fit to commit to writing for fear of accidents — I heard from Eliza a few days since she writes that they are all well, Martha goes to Sunday school with her aunt Anne and spells in three ~~letters~~, I presume she does not go now as it is too cold — give my love to all your dear family, and all my good friends in M who enquire about me,

Miss Mary Jane Stuart.

Mifflin Town.

Pennsylvania.

Favoured by Mr McLean.

Perkins told me they accused him of addressing Miss Keely I hope Mr M may succeed in that quarter — I understand Mr McCullough is getting better slowly but not likely to recover entirely — I expect Prouse often visits you and as he is a favourite of mine tell him he really must make haste and get off the bachelor list — so many fine girls in Mifflin and he still insensible it seems to argue a very hard heart — how is Mary Stuart — the Dr might make a trial there would it not do? — My paper warns me to end my scrawl — adieu my dear sister

yours ever M M Stuart.

[CA. 1833]

Short between

Short Between the first Day of April and first Day of July 1829. I placed in the hand of my Father (Benjamin Dann I cannot now call to my recollection) Benjamin Dann, three hundred and ten Dollars, and in the Spring of 1830, the further sum of $2.00.— also a Horse of the value of $80. — as estimated by my Father, together $590. — These two sums of money and the Horse, I received from the estate of my Dec'd Husband Barney. H. Stuart, and handed over as before mentioned to my Father, to be held by him in trust for the use of my Son Barney, Harry Stuart, with the understanding on my part that it was to bear an interest at the rate of 3½ per cent per annum till paid. — I further state that I have never received from my Father the money and Horse as above stated, nor any part thereof, nor to my knowledge, has it, nor any part of it, been applied to the use of my Son then and still a minor, that the entire amount remaining in the hands of my Father unpaid, to this Day, who on several occasions informed me, that he had given a Judgment to secure the payment to secure the payment thereof to myself when required, and entered of record in Jefferson County, with my knowledge, and after probation. —

Margaret S Porter. —

1849 Nov. 23

Phila Nov 23d 1849.

When I came home dear Margaret I little thought that so much time would elapse before I should write to you but many things have prevented, the chief the weakness of my eyes from constant use, and indeed for some time Lillie's cough was so bad as to prevent me from rest altogether and now she is not yet free from it but much better, Levi has been generally better than before I went to Harrisburg but is not well the cold seems to hang about him. He had the Carpet down when we arrived, had painted the room & rather had it done and made us look quite freshened up. I suppose you are busy preparing to break up I hope your head is better, for I well know you will have to superintend as no one can do that but the Lady of the house — in James's letter you do not say whether Mr Law remained long after we left did she get the Napkin which man must have taken from you with Lillie, we threw it out at the door as we passed not expecting to see the General at the Depot — I hope Elizabeth is more reconciled to Lewisburg than when I heard from her give my best love to her when you write and tell her some of these times I intend writing her a letter my heart warms to her when I think of her and her dear little children. May God make her last days her best days for she has truly worn the yoke in her youth — is Emmeline more encouraging to John? and what does the General think of moving there? I gave James the prescription for your head which I hope you will try — I know how to sympathise with you as I have enough of it all the time to keep me from getting

We have received our Talbot types which are very good and we are to still have the Portraits but I do not know how long, Williams having sent for his other pictures and mentioned that we were not to send the Portraits you cannot tell how much this rejoices us as it is so delightful to look up and see the dear faces of our beloved parents looking down upon us truly there can be but one mother! I used to feel when I was a child that if my mother was taken from me I should die! but God mercifully spared her to see all her children settled in life and then her anxieties were for her dear boy how often did she commit him to Levi and me and I think we will never forget it — and dear Father, was he not gathered as a shock of corn fully ripe, his work was done and well done and what a happy life was his the only great trial in it was the death of his only son and such a son! but there was such a mingling of mercy even in that cup that much of the bitterness was taken away and he was soon taught to say not my will but thine be done — but I must not talk all night about the dear ones who are gone to heaven oh that we could be like them that where they are we might be also — dear Margaret do you not feel as if you lived below your privileges, the life which I lead seems to me so much upon the surface so full of the monotony of the world and yet lack strength to tear myself more from it, I see I need a deeper insight into my inner life and yet find my time all & strength taken away in things which seem to be duties but occupy too much of my attention, I think this is perhaps the experience of every mother of a family but it should not be so,

you will tire of reading such a long letter but I am in the humour of talking to you — How is sweet, lovely, little Nelly — and bright-eyed Maggy and little affectionate Kind Douglas, Kiss them all for me remember me most kindly to my friends in general and to Mrs Forster and Mrs Rutherford in particular James is looking very well and I am happy to say is much neater this winter than last —. he votes chilblains a humbug when I beg him to moderate his if possible for fear of waking the baby write soon and tell me all the news, I presume the Lady who was married to our relation must have married Agnew Surgeon a son in law of Daniel Adams I knew him but slightly but he is very much respected. Eliza is so much taken up with Matters concerns that I seldom see her I do not yet know what disposal they have made of the silver not having yet been consulted about the matter. I am sorry Mrs Dewitt delivery carried her so far I should not have thought it the least unseemly had she called without her mother, Eliza Ann McMain otherwise Hutchinson has a fine babe it must be premature as she has not been married but about 8 months now, and it is some weeks old I do not know how many. Mary my nurse thinks if work should be slack she will send Alek up to Harrisburg with a request to the general to give him some employment as he is a likely boy, but as yet he has work here. has Maggy left Jane yet? I suppose Rebecca will remain, I was sorry in my hurry in getting up I minded bidding them good by. remember me kindly to them, Stuart goes to School and is engaged commencing Geography, History and so forth. —

He sends a great deal of love to the children.
Levi desires his most affectionate remembrances to
both the General and yourself in which I most
cordially join - when you write mention whether the
General would think it best for Mary's husband to seek
work in Harrisburg as he is but daily employed there
he is said to be very steady and obliging - good night dear
Margaret - your affectionate sister

M. M. Eldridge

1851 July 8

Harrisburg Tuesday July 8th — 51.

Dearest Ben

I have not any news to communicate but what Andrew Boyd can give you, but I supposed you would expect a letter from me by him. I recieved your letter yesterday I called to see Andrew but did not find him at home his Ma promised to send him to see me I hope he will yet call, I send by him two Cravats and one pair of gloves, I think that is all you will require until your return, let me know in your next at what time your vacation occurs May Bob that do — he likes the school much, and I hope you will get to like it better at all events if you do not feel quite so happy do not complain to any one but myself it would not be treating me Sonny properly and it would only incur enemies to yourself — Mr Sonny I feel persuaded adopts that mode of discipline which he thinks best adapted to all, some you know require a stricter rein than others, and yet he cannot show partiality, My Dear Ben do improve your time to the best advantage, try and make a scholar and a useful man of yourself — that is our hope never let us blush for any of your actions or want of information, which with the advantages you have had you ought to possess, You must not expect me this session, if all things go well, with your Fathers permission I may perhaps accompany you when you return, but even this is uncertain — Douglas is delighted that you remember him so affectionately dear little Mary says tell Ben that I want him to send me a little letter when the writes again — Your Father Aunt — Mrs Graham and Jennie unites in much love to you remember us affectionately to the Miss Sonny — and also Mrs Sonny your Father was quite pleased with her —

your loving Mother — Adieu God bless you my Son —

Let me know in your next if
this is properly directed I do not
remember what the inventor said

Yours truly

Prof. L. Foster.
Lemont Institute
Hartzville
Bucks Co.
Pa.

By Andrew Rolf

1852 June 21

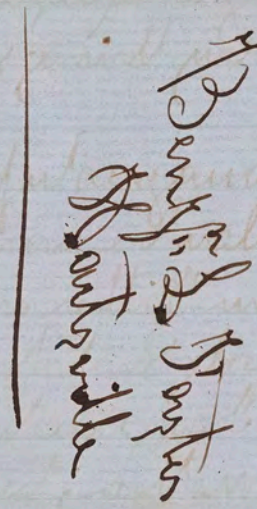
Harrisburg June 21st 52.

My dear dear Ben

I have seated myself in order to scribble you a few lines in great haste George Buehler kindly called last evening with H Schmeltzer to say that he would take in charge anything I should desire to send to you. — I have baked you a fruit cake myself I wish to know when you write if it is good it is somewhat burnt on the top which you can remove with a sharp knife I thought it better not to disturb it when fresh, I would have sent it, but am under the impression you don't like icing, of course you will divide with your friend George I think you will find all you requested in your letter and we also want to know how every thing suits if she disappoints her —

I have had a Dauguerreotype from James and also two letters recently from Fellowlee wants mine in return, I take pleasure from myself your Father and all the children duly labelled, he says he often feels that it would be to him the greatest happiness in the world to look into his heart, & tell me how much he loves his mother, he says he is encrusting all over with a coat of selfishness to all mankind, but it only has a tendency to draw him closer to me. — I have had rather a dreary week of it, I have not been over the threshold of the front door to day, Christmas I was not out either, — I wish you could have been here but on the whole you are as well if not better than to have come you will not have the pain of par

tions from us — I presume you have heard of poor Bailey's awful fate Andie Rose called to see me and kindly offered to take any message I might wish to send — your father is waiting to close the box so I must abruptly stop. God bless you my Son throughout this year and all your days & soon earthly or last receive you into his kingdom is your mother's fervent Prayer —



1854 Feb. 3

Holidays Cove
Febuary 3rd 1854

Dear Aunt

As I have promised frequently to write to you and have neglected for so long a period in doing so, I suppose you have given up all hopes of ever hearing from me; but far be it from that, I have been threatening every day since I have returned to drop you a few lines but one thing or another has always prevented me, but finally I have taken my seat to let you know that I still bear a grateful remembrance towards you.

Since I have returned I have enjoyed unusually good health and I may also add spirits; in fact it is ~~always~~ almost an impossible thing to get low spirited, for I am kept busy from morning till night and in the evenings if I am not busy in the office I generally spend them in reading or visiting the ladies as there is a tolerable good society in this neighbourhood, and the ladies as a general thing are very agreeable and rather pretty. We have at present a reading society formed in the Cove which consists of a number of ladies and gentlemen who choose a president and two managers who appoint two or three of the society to read, they meet every Tuesday evening, when those who are appointed read from some historical work, the length that one person reads is 30 minutes. It is not only interesting but also very instructive, for it not only acquaints a person with history but improves his reading.

I think that this month will come very near finishing our work in Virginia; at present we have the track laid over the first three miles and two weeks more will finish the grading on the remainder, so that by the first or the middle of March at the farthest we will be through. The friends of this road have given up all idea of obtaining a Charter from the State of Virginia as the committee have reported unfavorably and now the only thing that remains to be done is to push the track through to the State line before the legislature of this State passes a law prohibiting our going on, after the track is through to the State line then have Congress declare it a post route, the Erie difficulty has effected this road considerably in the way that Pennsylvania has behaved towards New York. The people in this neighborhood are very much afraid that we will be compelled to quit before the track is finished and are therefore very anxious to see the work pushed forward with all the energy possible.

The weather in this section of country has been very cold for the last two or three weeks and every appearance of it continuing for some time; this is as pleasant a section of country to live in as a person could wish for, every thing is very convenient. The town of Steubenville is situated within three miles of this place and there is a daily mail passes through here. There is two churches in this village one is under the Methodite denomination the other is under the Presbyterian we have preaching every other Sabbath a Mr Calhoun preaches in the Presbyterian he is rather a good speaker but he has one fault and that is he preaches entirely too long, if he would stop when he is about half way it would be a very good sermon but he always overdoes the thing, his sermons is always from an hour and a half to two hours long. The other man suits his congregation very well.

There has been quite a destruction in the Ohio river this winter, there has been from twenty to thirty coal boats and a goodly number of lives, this was occasioned by the rise in the waters, we have had quite a flood in the Allegheny and Monongahela and navigation has been partially closed on account of so much ice running in the stream.

I am not certain whether Ben is in Harrisburg or not if he is there please let me Know and I will write to him or by the way he owes me a letter. Give my love to Grandfather and all the rest. Tell Doctor Rutherford that I have been on the look-out for a coon dog for him but as yet I have not succeeded, I did have one engaged that came very well recommended but when I found what age he was I would have nothing to do with him, he was twelve years of age very near old enough to vote, but I think I am on the track now by which I shall get a very good dog, he is well recommended by the whole neighbourhood and he is young. Tell the Doctor if I succeed he will hear from me as soon as possible. Please answer soon and direct to Holidays Cove Hancock County, Virginia

Yours Truly
John T. Foster

1854 Mch. 27

Lewistown Monday
March 27th. 54

My dear Mrs. Foster.

I do not know the name, or residence of that elderly woman who was formerly a servant in your family, and who engaged to live with us, when we went to housekeeping, therefore I am about troubling you to see her, and ascertain whether she will be true to her engagement? We cannot get possession of the house we have rented, until about the 20th of April. and will you please oblige me,

by letting me know her name, and if she will come, and live with us?

I regretted hearing of your recent affliction in the death of your dear Father - and yet, the departure of a Christian from this world of sin, and suffering, to a brighter, and a better home, ought rather to be a matter of rejoicing - I passed through Harrisburgh the day succeeding his interment, and met Mr Banks at Mifflin, who told me of Mr Lane's decease - He mentioned you had so much comfort in the last hours and peaceful death of your venerable

Parent. I never knew what it was to have a Father - mine died suddenly, when I was not quite seven years of age, but I was privileged to have a Mother until the Summer of 49 - Like yourself, I have been called to part with an idolized Husband, but our loss, was their gain.

"How blest the righteous when they die."

My love to your pretty Sister - respects to the Messrs Forster's - believe me

very sincerely your affec: friend.

Anna Maria McCay.

My Husband saw your brother John, when he was in our town - He sends his regards to both the Mrs. Forsters, and yourself -

M

13

1854 June 17

Morristille, June 17th 54

Mrs Foster—

Dear Medam.

On Tuesday last I received a long letter from your Son, James, inasmuch as I ~~did~~ do not know whether he wrote to you at the same time, & as I know that any good news from him would be more than pleasant to you, I have concluded to address you & give you the information which has so much pleased me,— that he is very well & is enjoying himself very greatly— His letter was sent from Hong Kong, above date of 4 March 4th—

It is probable that James writes to me more frequently than to any other of his friends, & if you desire me to do so, I will write to you directly after receiving any letter from him, as I know that your anxiety for him must be very great—

I have heard James speak so very frequently of you that I feel a very great desire to become acquainted with you, but as yet have had no opportunity of gratifying this wish— The extreme degree of intimacy existing between James & myself will, doubtless, absolve me from the imputation of impertinence in having written

to a lady of your age with whom I am perfectly unacquainted —

Your son, Benjamin, & Robert Harris & Mont Foster comprise all of my acquaintances in Harrisburg, to all of whom I desire to be remembered —

Respectfully your friend,
Thos J. Coston

Mrs Foster —

1854 June 20

Philadelphia June 20. 1854

My Dear Madam,

At the request of your affectionate sister I most gladly will perform the duties of an amanensis, but would it was from a happier cause.

Yesterday afternoon a letter was received by Sister Eliza from Sister Carrie informing us of the the arrival of William Mc Mann and Henry with Pauline but — Martha was first buried at New Madrid and Kate at St Louis from Cholera, which they took while coming up the Mississippi. The times of their deaths and all particulars we are waiting anxiously for. Sister Carrie saw the stage & ran out to meet and not seeing all whom she looked for said, "Where is Kate?" and her poor husband answered "We are all here that are alive" We feel that

Martha could not have baffled long with the disease as she was just able to be got out after an attack of fever. From letters written at St, Louis (but not received until after their arrival) sister Eliza says they were there 4 days in which time Kate recovered and it was thought permanently but there was a change in the weather. which caused a relapse & she died in 36 hours
A letter was sent from here by the last Steamer to California for James; while Eliza was getting her letter to him, also, directed, the sad intelligence was left at her house.
My health is about the same as it was when I last wrote you
My plans are now altogether undecided

Your affectionate sister,

Martha;

pr. Edward B. Hughes

With much sympathy for you in this sad visitation of Providence and kind remembrances to Mr Benjamin & Maggie I hope it will not be too much to hope for an answer to this second message of us, which for "dear Martha"

sake it has been my happy duty to perform.—

Yours affectionately

Edward B. Hughes

1854 Oct. 25

Phila Oct 25th 1854

My Dear Sister

Your kind letter containing news of My Dear James arrived last week – I have been a good deal engaged answering letters since or should have replyed sooner – I received the same Journal you did besides a very kind and affectionate letter, and since that another, bringing my news as late as the second of August, he is most anxious to know all about my circumstances and goes as I knew he would in relation to them. "Dear Boy may God forever bless him, he says "Dear Aunt – there can be no question of money matters between us that them a feeling of pleasure if either can benefit the other by it," and then insists upon my using his Allotment and the interest of his property which was in his Uncles hands – He was not aware that although it is perfectly safe it does not at present pay any interest being in the Pleasure Ship stock, which is a very good investment I think, but owing to the expense they have put upon the Ships this year will probably pay no dividend – They are doing a fine business and as soon as stocks are better they will doubtless sell well. but at present you know every thing is depressed.

What a comfort it has been to me to have these letters from My or rather our Noble Boy – I weep dear Maggie as I write – I cannot tell you how much I see his noble unselfish conduct, if he were truly my son he could say no more than he has or he would be were with me – I am so much better that sometimes I feel I may live to see him but – God only knows and I will try to say his Will be done. Dear James feels much for My little Stuart and sends him a kind message to keep up his courage. Stuart writes to me regularly once a week often twice, he is quite happy with his Aunt Lucie and improving in health and I hope in everything Stuart Mitchell and his Bride are at Homedale at present; he was married on the 16th inst to Miss Jennie F Patterson Daughter of Late Hon William Patterson of Warsaw, We expect them about the 1st Nov in Phila My Stuart says, "she is so sweet she wants to be Mamy for all the time", I hope we shall see her – I am very glad Stuart is married it will take quite a care off my mind. My dear Sister you will want to know particularly about My health – I am able to ride about in an omnibus now, and walk a very few squares, and have been at church the last few sabbaths once a day – so that I am much stronger

than I was six weeks since, a few nights since I had one of my attacks of the heart, but was only confined one day to bed with it, showing that I have more vital energy than I have had since last spring, perhaps after all I may be spared a little longer to my poor children, The Dr all seemed spoke so despondingly of my case that I did not allow myself to think of being spared even to this time — Oh Maggie I fear I do not improve under these chastisements as I should, how spiritual minded should one be who has lived so many month shut out from the world and all its busy scenes, and yet I find myself clinging to the dear ones spared to me so devotedly that I fear sometimes I shall bring down the rod again upon me, Oh pray for me dear sister that I may not grow hardened under the chastisements of my heavenly Father. indeed I need your prayers — Oh for Faith in God, to feel that I am one of his children, and that all these things are working together for good —

Dear James says he was glad you were with me during the time when I needed sympathy so much but I need it no less now, you can have some idea of my loneliness, that terrible feeling of desolation which oppresses me all the time, the thought that I must go on through life without that loving heart to lean upon, that I must use my own judgment and decide without his counsel to

whom I looked in very difficulty —— but I will talk no more of this, you know how to pity and feel for me I am aware my dear M. and you can do no more. I hope Dear M. you are all recovering from the fever — W. and I have talked a good deal about going up to St, I do not yet know whether we will accomplish it. Henry & Pauline have not returned yet from Augusta, Maine, we expect them this week. They will not return to Louisiana until the Fever abates. Have you had any recent news from James Lamb? did you not expect him this Fall? remember me most kindly to Mr Foster, Ben & Maggie, kiss the little ones for me — love to dear Elizabeth. Mrs Johnson sends love, poor Louise Prescott has returned from Maine; on account of the illness of Mr Canby — they were to have been married this month, now I fear it will never be — he seems to be in a consumption. She is flattering herself he is getting well. our house is very full, even the back parlour given up to Mrs Drummond and her Grandchild. we have plenty of children, but get along peacebly —— Write as often as you can. your letters comfort me. Will Hutchins has had a beautiful likeness taken from the Daguerrotype for me — he is as kind as ever, but of course I do not see him as often — he is allways doing something for me — My last letter from James came enclosed in one for Will. indeed Will has tryed to take James place ever since last Spring — Ave Devoir, my dear sister

your affectionate Matty Eldridge

1855 Apr. 9

Brentwood, Apl 9th/55

Mrs Foster,

My dear Madam,

I consider it my duty — & a most painful one it is, too, — to transmit to you the enclosed letter, which I took from a late paper. If the news conveyed in that letter is true, then one of the noblest hearts that ever beat — one of the most generous & estimable of men, now lies silent in death. It may be (and may God mercifully grant that it shall be so!) that he is not lost, that he may yet return to his friends; but alas! I cannot entertain such a hope.

I am heavy-hearted & sad, Mrs Foster. My spirit is bowed down to the dust with overwhelming grief. Sorrow such as words cannot portray rests upon me. Dear lost Jim was the most beloved of all my friends. (Mrs Foster will understand why I say "Jim" instead of James; — as such I knew him, loved him, when living, & as such I will ever keep his memory green.) Between him & myself a degree of intimacy and perfect confidence existed such as very seldom

occurs. He saw through my imperfections, weaknesses & faults, & found that I was, in some measure, deserving of his friendship. He knew me & loved me, & I loved him because I knew him. Our friendship was of the heart, from the heart, & in the heart. We were indeed, as we used to call each other, "vera brithers." His friendship was one of the brightest jewels that my soul ever possessed, & his death has made a cruel wound in my heart which will never entirely heal. He was ever kind, honorable, generous, noble, and faithful. I cannot tell how much I loved him — that love is too deep for words.

Since he left us, he has written to me very frequently; & his letters invariably gave evidence of a continuance of his strong friendship for me. At one time, he writes of having collected some curiosity for my cabinet, — again, he tells me of having a cigar-case made at Hong Kong for "brither Sam", — & again, he sends some leaf or flower to me as a mark of his remembrance. Always anxious to please those whom he loved, who could help but love him?

Ah! dear lost Jim! where now are all our pleasures which we had so fondly anticipated should take place when you should have returned! Where now the long confidential

conversations, the almost endless smoking seasons, & the numerous plans of pleasure to which we have been joyously looking forward! Ah me! never again will I grasp that manly hand, or gaze upon that honest face, or hear that pleasant voice. Alas! God has dealt painfully with me! I will never find another such friend.

It would be in vain, Mrs Foster, for me to attempt to enumerate the good qualities of him whom we both so much loved. Your grief must far outweigh mine, for you loved him with a Mother's love. I could not say too much in praise of him, but you do not need to be told of his worthiness, for you know it.

I hope — I know — that Mr Foster will appreciate the motive which prompted me to write this letter. I feel my utter inability to give expression to those emotions which fill my heart with sadness, but I could not refrain from making the effort. And I feel confident that you will accept my sympathy and allow me to take part in your grief.

If you should ever visit Philada., you would confer a special favor upon me by letting me know where I can

find you, for I much desire to see & know the Mother of him who so much loved me & whom I so ardently loved.

Believe me, Mrs Juster,

Most sincerely your friend,

Thos J. Corson

Mrs Juster.

1855 Aug. 31

Phila August 31/55

My Dear Mrs. Foster

This morning I received your note and hasten to reply to it

Mrs Eldridge returned from Cape-Island last tuesday, not at all improved in health but much more weak than when she left home, she has kept her bed for ten weeks at least, her complaints appear to be principally indigestion and nervous prostration she is unable to take any nourishment except a little beef tea and occasionally a little cream To day she has employed a new Physician a Homo-pathist and he speaks encouragingly to her and we hope she will soon begin to improve under his treat-ment-. Mrs Eldridge seems pleased at the idea of seeing you and gratified to hear that you ex-press a desire to be with her. though she says she cannot bear any allusions her great affliction that is the result of nervous depression no doubt you will pitty her when you see her from the bottom of your heart

I am happy to say to you my dear Mrs Foster that we can accomodate you very conveniently at the present time, as some members of our family are absent and probably will be for two or three weeks to come so we shall hope for the

pleasure of seeing you in the course of a very few days
please excuse these few hasty lines as I have a good deal
to attend to day one of my girls being away

Yours truly

N. Johnson

1875 Mar. 17

Worth P. O. Mercer Co. Pa
March 17, 1875,

Dear Cousin, Mrs Foster.

I suppose you will think we have forgotten our promise to Correspond with you, but once a year is about as often as I find time to write to my friends. At present we enjoy good health, likewise all our friends as far as known to us – enjoy good health. Father Banks has been unusually well the past winter, which was very Cold here. March Came in like a Lion, and roars like a Lion yet. yesterday and today were both very Stormy. Mrs Burgess has some one hundred and twenty five pots with house plants; got through the winter pretty safely. In your letter you requested me to write you a family history. I fear I am not well qualified to do so, but will do the best I can, not giving dates. Father Banks' oldest daughter Elizabeth Married Mr Wm Gault, a good religious man. They had Two sons and four daughters. Mary Ann the oldest married James Turner. He died about one year after their marriage. She had a young son which we took when 18 months old. he lived till seven years old and died. She married again Mr Wm Carlon. They live in Sowellville Ohio, have two sons & two daughters. We have the oldest girl, she was with us at your house. James Andrew Gault the oldest son

married Miss Emma Rutan. They have two or three children. He went into the mercantile business in Pittsburgh, is now in the Banking business in Titusville. Benjamin Calvin came to live with us after his father's death, at his father's request. At about eighteen he went into the Army, and served till the war closed. He married Maggie Gilkie, a very fine woman, are both members of the U. P. Church. Have one daughter Cora, and one son Benjamin Calvin Gault. He is in the lumber business. Margaret Jane, second daughter married Mr Jacobs, they first went to Missouri, then to Kansas. They have 2 or 3 children. Rebecca Law the third daughter lived with us from four years old till married to Mr R. G. Mady a veteran of the late war. They are both U. P.'s, have one son and three daughters. Frances Elizabeth the youngest married Wm Rhodes they had one child but it died. James L. Banks married Sarah A. McDowell. He enlisted in the army & died at Beaufort S. Carolina of disentery and inflamation of the bowels. He never joined the Church, but Dr Browne Chaplain of the reg. told me, he thought he was well exercised on his death bed. They had 2 sons and 2 daughters. Samuel the oldest son served through the war, is now living single in Nebraska. Josephine married Mr Quist have 4 children he is a shoemaker lives one mile from home

Eva, Louis Mossouth and Eddie are at home with their mother. Margaret Banks married Joseph Sampson, they were both U.P.'s, (and Sarah A. after James died joined the U.P. church) Margaret has 5 sons and 2 daughters. John the oldest is a lawyer, (single) James Banks, farmer single. Andrew Theodore married Prudy Ashmore just lately. Wm and Stewart the youngest are at home. Mary Ann the oldest daughter married Mr Wm Eckels, he teaches school; tried merchandizing a while, then fell back to teaching. They have two Children, a son & daughter, Elizabeth the 2d daughter is still single. It is expected she will marry Mr Mehard Neil, A fine young man of very respectable family. A U.P. Andrew's wife Prudy Ashmore is a very fine woman a Lutheran.

Rebekah Ann Banks married one A.J. Burgess. I presume you have some faint recollection of him, having been overtaken in a terrible thunder storm whilst traveling together. You are aware they never had any children of their own yet it has been their fortune to have all they needed from their friends.

Mary Jane Banks married Rev E. Ogden, a Presbyterian Preacher, They had 3 daughters and one son, which survive their mother, Mr Ogden married a third wife with whom Mary Jane's children,

have very little comfort. Elizabeth the oldest daughter left home and is married to a mechanic I have forgotten his name. Mary. Elect and James are at home.

Andrew Banks married Hannah McDowell, James' wife's sister. They have three daughters living one dead. Olive the oldest married last winter Mr Wm Jordan a member of Rich Hill (Presbyterian) Congregation I think she has married very well. Mary and Martha are still single.

Now dear Cousin, I have given you a short history of your friends in this part of the state, a connection you have no reason to be ashamed of. All respectable, many pious, although none that would be called wealthy, yet all well enough off to live Comfortably.

This evening is the 23. of March. The ground is still covered with snow. & the weather Cold.

Dear Friend we would be very glad to receive a line from you, as we have not heard from you for a long time.

Rebekah and Marion join in love to you all. As the night is far spent I will bid you adieu

Yours affectionately

A. J. Burgess

PS I did not notice when I commenced I was writing on a half sheet A.J.B.

...admonish you not to ...
the Lord is a jealous God, he ...
he calls for your first and best love ...
Father, the truest and most faithful ...
husband, all our comforts here are of a ...
till fully & perfectly it.

"Wait as a flower transient at the South gate,"

Oh, how the coarsest heart when driven from one idol flies with a desperate ... upon another, with what an intense hold does it grasp the dear objects which the Lord has lent, he gives us friends to bless the present scene and we ought not to forget that it is his right to resume them when he pleases, it is easy for us to reason down our sins but that is not

Join ...
Mrs. ...

[illegible] the mean time
know if you think it nec[illegible]

[n.d.]

[illegible] from your better half, in good time to
[illegible] of the blues, and tell him for me that I
[illegible] the same. — There has very little transpired
[illegible] to arrive
[illegible] worthy of communication since you took your departure from this,
similar causes produces similar effects, and all things go on in the
usual humdrum sort of manner, — When David and I returned
from Millerstown we found Papa and Mother sitting at the front
door waiting for us, apparently feeling all that indescribable lone-
liness which follows such a parting. I do wish you and Mr.
[illegible] would visit us as soon as possible we are too lonesome for comfort

1875 Apr. 29

Savannah (Georgia)
April 29th 1875.

Dear Mother:

We reached this place last Evening thus far our "Bridal Tour" has been a constant excitement & enjoyment. I was Married on the 14th of this month & left immediately for New Orleans by Steam Boat. Remaining in N.O. five days the most pleasant place I ever was in. My Wife's numerous friends made the time pleasant & agreeable. I will not attempt to tell you what we have seen until we meet.

This (Savannah) is one of the loveliest cities I ever beheld, & Save (Paris) the most beautiful. We will take in Charleston & Washington also Baltimore before we reach Harrisburg. I cannot say when this will be as we intend to see Washington thoroughly as my "better half" has never been there: it may be the latter end of next

work. I have been in such a constant whirl since our Marriage that I can scarcely collect my ideas to write. We will only be a few days with you, & not like to make or give trouble. to pass a few quiet family days with you, and continue our journey Homeward.

My Wife sends love and sincere fate, Much pleasure in meeting you. She has heard through Col & Mrs Anderson a good deal about our family they were at our Wedding. We had an elegant Wedding. My Wife receiving many elegant Presents. Thus being all the rage now, She came in for her full portion.

The Weather here is now like your "Mid Summer."

I was minded to send you a paper containing notice of our Marriage. Can you tell me any thing about John. I will be in N. several days. but I do not know exactly where to find them. You might write at N. care of "Willard Hotel." We will not impose upon their hospitality, but would like to see them.

Affectionately, Your Son, Wm Forster.

Maj. Gen. John Forster.
Harrisburg.
Pennsylvania.

HARRISBURG PA.
MAY
3
7AM
REC'D